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CENTRE OF CRIMINOLOGY

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T R A N S I T I O N

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TRANSITION is written and edited by inmates and ex-inmates of federal penitentiaries with ensured anonymity, if desired, and with complete editorial freedom.

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Vol. 1 No. 5

June, 1973.

.... Notes and other clutter

This is a hard issue; perhaps the hardest we've yet published. Perhaps no one will believe we wanted to provide some optimistic material for the Congress. We did, and much more than that we can't say. Probably this issue will begin alienating some of our readers, some inmates included.

The Congress itself is reason for optimism. An interface between everyone involved in Canadian corrections has been a long time coming and for just as long has been necessary, especially where ex-inmate groups are concerned.

This issue begins the memoirs of Slow George, as you'll doubtless agree, a rather peculiar old-timer but characteristic of at least one man in every penitentiary. He'll be with us in every issue for quite a while to come.

A couple of articles are academically slanted. We aren't trying to impress anybody, as a few cons have mentioned, we're simply trying to say some things that can't be said any other way and still be read seriously by the people we want to read them. As Slow George says, "If you try to please all of the people all of the time you end up pleasing none of the people any of the time."

There are serious troubles in Dorchester, Prince Albert, and Millhaven Penitentiaries at the present time. We hope the inmates can keep the lid on them, because nobody else seems to care --- at least nobody in a position to do anything effective.

Again, we remind people in the corrections field that our pages are open for their comments or articles pertaining to corrections and remind also that anonymity will be as scrupulously protected as it is for inmates.

We're sorry this is a hard issue. Perhaps by next month we can get into more pleasant things.

EDITORIAL

am

We would like first to welcome all of the delegates to this 1973 Criminology and Corrections Congress, even those who are not inmates or ex-inmates.

Transition is a partisan publication. It's editorial line has been termed bitchy, blasphemous, hard defensive, aggressive, humanitarian, criminal, absurd, obscene, etcetra. This is our fifth issue. Curses or compliments, brickbats or bouquets, we are here to stay --- because Transition is also somewhat cynical. We suspect the form and philosophy, practices and preachments of our justice system are also here to stay, and we aren't keen enough on their efficacy to just sit by and not do anything about them. Nor are any other of the ex-inmates present at this Congress; nor, we hope, are any of the other delegates. In this, then, presumably we are one. The differentiation between corrections professionals, corrections workers, ex-inmates, and inmates can be unqualifiedly dissolved.

Or can it? In terms of corrections measures the cons and ex-cons say they know best. Why? Because they've done the time. The corrections professionals and workers say they know best. Why? Because they've read the books. Some of course haven't read the books, and their interest is in making sure no one gets close enough to find this out. And too, they're usually the ones with all that practical grass roots experience. While the objectives seem to be the same, the means to the objectives are so different they sometimes seem to diverge. Wishful thinking is the notion that this Congress can get it all together.

But it can do one thing, delegates willing. All of us know rhetoric when we hear it and reality when we see it. Rhetoric begets rhetoric; it's a time-

wasting, vicious circle; we don't need it, we shouldn't want it. So let's for once dispense with it. There cannot be rapport if there is patronage, there cannot be communication if there is condescension, and there cannot be reality if there is hypocrisy. 'Nuff said. Have fun!

CCA CONGRESS PREVIEW

The following is condensed from a paper prepared for the 1973 CCA Congress to be delivered on June 26th, by Eugene Ostiguy, inmate, Saskatchewan Penitentiary.

EMOTIONAL DEPRIVATION - Prisons' Built-in Defect

Despite the changes that have been occurring in prisons for the last few years, the final results seem to remain much the same. What had been lauded as "sweeping reforms" have done little to change the rate of recidivism or keep criminals from graduating to more serious crimes. Speaking from experience I would also say that the level of punishment, in the final analysis, seems to have remained the same. Here we have a paradox, at least on the surface. There have, supposedly, been great changes. Yet the end results seem to have remained the same --- both in punishment and rehabilitation.

What we must look at then is something that is common to all prisons and has remained unchanged through the years --- the emotional environment. Prisons do not allow love, affection, dignity, and self-esteem. Yet, once these are taken away from a person there's nothing else of significance that can be done to or for him.

The normal human response to being deprived of love and affection is frustration, rage, and aggression. At least there is some comfort in knowing that we're normal. We live in an environment where violence is the order of the day. But not all men will commit acts of violence. Many are capable of suppressing it. They go on, year after year, holding in the rage and aggression, keeping a tight lid on the turmoil within and dreaming of vengeance.

When a man suffers indignities --- is forced to live like cattle or is treated in a debased and debasing manner on a continual basis, he must protect the last shreds of self-worth by feeling contempt for the people who view him in such a condition or who force him into it. He must feel that they are so low and despicable that it could not possibly matter what they think or do. In the same manner, an open show of rejection by members of the outside world will lead to contempt for society as a whole. Indignities and rejection are also part of the prison environment. So now we have a man who may have come in as a good-natured stumblebum, but who is reshaped into a bitter, hostile vengeance-seeker with sheer contempt for society.

Now can we expect a person to strive for personal growth in a prison. According to psychologists, all needs can be divided into five categories. The most basic are physical needs, then safety needs, love and affection needs, esteem needs, and finally self-actualization needs. The person will tend to work at filling one need only when the more basic ones are satisfied. In other words, if a person's needs for love and affection are not satisfied, he will tend to get hung up at that level and never go on to fulfilling esteem needs, let alone self-actualization. The penitentiary service has been working backwards in trying to fill personal growth needs, but leaving love and affection and esteem needs bankrupt.

I have here been dealing in generalities. It is in fact a tribute to the resilience of the human mind

and efforts of sheer will that some men are able to circumvent the effects of emotional deprivation and leave prison in a relatively healthy state of mind. But most are not. Until significant reforms along these lines become a reality, rehabilitation will remain at best a chancy possibility---at worst a myth.

CON-AID:

Where to go when there's no place left to go

"We get tired of watching friends kill themselves.

We get tired because we know the reasons why they do it. We get tired because we know the prison administration knows the reasons too. We get tired because we know there is a remedy for it in most cases. So does the prison administration. It should: the reasons are inherent in the prison structure, the way in which it is administered, and the people who administer it.

"J'accuse! A waste of breath ... Tom Turkey should be doing 15 years on five counts of manslaughter ... another waste of breath ... not because it isn't true but because nobody's listening. And let us by all means not demean the Penitentiary Service ... after all, it's found a way to reinstate capital punishment. If you get whizzed out of the joy of hanging a man yourself, what's better than to coerce him into doing it to himself?"

Among the inmates from federal penitentiaries presenting papers at this 1973 Corrections Congress is a representative of Saskatchewan Penitentiary's Con-Aid group, a kind of roving Crisis Center comprised of inmates on 24-hour call to help meet the needs and cope with the problems of their fellow inmates.

Prison administrators acquiesced to the formation of Con-Aid in the wake of three suicides in four months, at least two of which were directly related to drug abuse. So far this June, there have been two more suicides in the Saskatchewan Penitentiary.

Con-Aid is described by its inmate directors as "a program by and for the convict. It is a way of allowing us to do something for ourselves rather than look to the authorities for our every need." That they must be allowed to try to save lives well states the policies of the penitentiary service in Canada, particularly when the penitentiary service which has an obligation to save lives isn't fulfilling that obligation.

Be that as it may, Con-Aid has been active since January of this year. Basically its functions have been two: problem-solving and education.

Six inmates have approval to leave their cells or work placements any time during the day or night to rap to men who might be in need of someone to talk to. Inmates in Segregation (the hole) may get out to rap with another convict for short periods of time. An observation cell in the hospital is now available for inmates who might be under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

In addition, since January a drug education program has been underway which has expanded to include

Con-Aid member talks to local school students, as well as inmates. Considerable local media exposure has been generated. The Prince Albert newspaper reported some public criticism of having inmates talk to students but generally parents accept, as the PA reporter notes, "that only those who have taken the walk, can talk." And too, most parents would agree that it's better to have their kids hearing about drugs than shooting them, and better to have ex-users telling them than selling them.

Con-Aid is doing as good a job as is within its power. But it's something like the halfway house being used to re-adjust ex-cons to community life; as long as it exists it stands as a sign that our prisons do far more damage to men and women than they do good. At least inmates have realized that if they can't get a new tire, they may as well patch the old one because they're the only ones who suffer when the car runs on its rims, unless one is to count the taxpayer though he so rarely counts (the waste) himself, one wonders, why bother?

A T T I C A

R.I.P.?

Not A Chance

Review of the Report of the New York State Commission
of Enquiry Into Attica.

Book reviews are usually a little out of our line but looking at the avowed objectives of the CCA Congress we think this one needs printing, if for no other reason than as a reminder that while four days of talks are fine, four hours of concerned action would probably be a lot finer.

Our post-liberal consciences are of such delicacy or insensitivity that by the time official reports of our more tragic indifferences are published, their significance and our personal culpability are forgotten. We try to bury our dead quickly. Sometimes we don't even wait for them to die; we bury them alive. This happened with Attica. Who remembers the event? Or has inkling still of why it occurred? Who remembers the Kingston riot shortly after Attica? Same type, same causes, same dead, same ritualized repression of reality by the justice system.

The Enquiry's Report clarifies rather than obscures the issues of Attica, revives rather than smothers. That it also documents the probable causes of the next major riot in a Canadian maximum security penitentiary should alone be reason to read it.

The Report's relevance to justice professionals is unassailable --- each segment of the justice system

would find comfort in knowing that it is not alone in its deceit, corruption, and incompetence. Not only is the Report about a New York State prison riot and the New York justice system, it is about Canadian prisons --- and it is about the Canadian justice system.

"Attica is every prison: and every prison is Attica." Of 33 Attica inmates' demands, I counted 20 which should be implemented in the Saskatchewan Penitentiary; four which were inapplicable; nine which are already satisfied, if inadvertently. The entire justice system and its processes can be sorted through just as easily. Moreover, inequities and injustices would be revealed as abundant throughout. The Commission of Enquiry discovered them in New York State and it wasn't even looking hard; here too, one wouldn't have to look hard.

Racism was an issue in Attica, but not so important that the uprising can be attributed to it alone. Our racism is somewhat more low-keyed but it is here --- between natives and whites, staff and inmates, in our Western prisons and in Dorchester between blacks and whites. It is here and it affects institution life much more than staff will ever concede.

Other causes discovered in Attica are present here too. Inmate distrust, responsible for the breakdown in negotiations at Attica, is here; distrust of staff intentions, promises, and actions; and boiling out of this is distrust for all things governmental and all things "legal". Few inmates have not experienced illegal police practices, sentencing disparities, calculatedly coercive prison treatment, arbitrary parole selection and authoritarian parole supervision --- all of these so influential as the seedbed for inmate distrust and hatred are alive and thriving in Canada. More significant perhaps, increasing number of inmates are

realizing their problems are fostered, not alleviated, by the system.

The mandate of the New York Commission headed by Robert B. McKay, Dean of the NYU School of Law, did not specify that the causes of the uprising be unearthed, but that the Commission was only to discover and deliver the facts of the uprising objectively. While they were for the most part successful, several aspects of the uprising deserved fuller treatment. For example, although the Commission did report its feeling that most inmate complaints were justified, the complaints, as they appeared in the inmate list of demands, were no more than itemized. That they were legitimate was implicit in the Commission's findings, including the inmates' demand that they be protected from prison staff reprisals after the riot.

Several of these demands should be of special interest to the legal profession in this country because they are of a legal nature and because they may soon appear as issues before Canadian courts.

Legal amnesty for criminal acts committed during disturbances is one of these. Amnesty was a key demand at Attica; so too, it was a demand at the not-so-long-ago Kingston upheaval. Especially when hostages are held, it consistently appears among rioting inmates' demands.

As at Attica, Canadian officials will promise amnesty if it is expedient despite it also being legally unenforceable. Prison officials have no mandate to offer it or authority to ensure it. Inmates have been slow to realize this. As recently as November last, two Prince Albert inmates with a hostage had officials ostensibly yield to their

demands. They have since found themselves faced with criminal charges and in-prison reprisals perpetrated by prison staff. Already, one of the two has been sentenced to an additional five years. General inmate distrust springs from such actions as these.

If the promise of a government official is conceived in deceit, why should a man being "corrected" accept that the law, conceived in the same "responsible spirit of good faith" is, indeed, acceptable? The issue has naught to do with the sweet reasonableness and cool logic of freeing a hostage; rather it is as fundamental to an inmate as why be obliged to respect what obviously is not respected by those who would compel the inmate's obligation? In the words of one criminologist, "no one should be expected to accept a verdict of his guilt, continued reinforcement of his guilt by society, and treatment for his guilty behaviour from someone or a system which is itself demonstrably not free of guilt."

Because distrust, fostered by the institutional milieu, precludes any possibility of fruitful negotiation in a crisis situation, legal amnesty should be a bargaining tool officials have at their disposal, but at the same time the inmates should have the courts available --- and accessible --- to ensure that officials remain bound to the amnesty.

The need for legal assistance to prisoners and restoration of a prisoner's and parolee's civil rights was a serious issue at Attica. Attica inmates demanded provision of legal assistance for pursuance of their criminal cases, in-prison disciplinary hearings, and all hearing pertaining to their paroles. In the last two, not only assistance but the right to have assistance was demanded. This, of course, is bound into

the whole matter of the inmate's civil rights. In Canada the situation is generally as bad as at Attica in this respect and where different, is different for the worse.

The following elements of due process are currently being denied every Canadian penitentiary inmate:

- 1) Access to legal assistance for appeals of original convictions or sentences. Some provinces provide assistance for conviction appeals but this is discretionary, it is not a right. None provide it automatically for sentence appeals. Also, inmates are obstructed in the preparation of their own cases by being denied access to a law library within the institutions (there are no law libraries in penitentiaries);
- 2) Legal representation, or even the right to cross-examine or face their accuser in in-prison disciplinary hearings. Because the outcome of a disciplinary hearing may influence an inmate's parole possibilities and because almost every such hearing ends in a guilty verdict (this keeps up staff morale, staff tell us), it can alter the form of the original prescribed sentence;
- 3) Legal representation in all parole matters. The parolee or prospective parolee has no right to present evidence, no right to cross-examine evidence presented by others, no right to know what others have presented. Nor does an inmate or parolee have recourse to an appeal. Parole Board decisions are at the least quasi-judicial --- whatever nonsense is in the Parole Act to frustrate an inmate's rights; therefore, the inmate should have some protection.

All of the above can affect an inmate's original sentence. Perhaps the classic example in Canada is the provision in the Parole Act for a parole violator to have to re-serve any part of his sentence which he has already served on parole. In other words, when a parole is treated by the Parole Service as a form of minimum security custody, as it presently is, the Parole Service possesses the uncontestable power to add to a man's original sentence by at least as much as the part of the sentence remaining at the time parole was granted. The old rationale was that the parole was a contract between Parole Service and parolee, therefore a penalty for a default was deemed reasonable. Now that Mandatory Supervision is with us, this argument loses the legitimacy it previously possessed.

The above three points, together with an arbitrary and oft-times unjust parole system almost a replica of Canada's in every respect, were not-to-be-forgottens at Attica. Nor are they forgottens to inmates here.

More than anything else written to date on Attica, the Report places the events in their proper historic and social context. Unfortunately, just as none have heeded the ominous message in Attica's violence, none will be likely to heed that contained in the Report.

POSTSCRIPT: 45% of inmates in Attica's D-yard, about 500 men, showed evidence of physical reprisals several days after the uprising was quelled. There was considerable evidence of mismanagement of the assault, deliberate denial of medical aid to wounded inmates, and no attempt to minimize loss of life. The weaponry used by State Troopers and corrections workers even constituted a violation of so rarified a document as the 1906 Geneva Convention.

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In December last, the final Grand Jury indictments were returned on the uprising: not a single corrections worker or State Trooper was indicted. There is, I suppose, one good thing to be said for the system: it surely does look after its own; and at least 83 ex-Kingston inmates who encountered just the same thing can verify this.

SASKATOON LETTER ...

While I have enjoyed reading your publication and believe that it is useful to have ex-inmate views presented to the community (this is not to say I agree with most of these views), I must take issue with the way you treated the difficulties associated with the John Howard Society's residential treatment center in Regina.

While I am not in a position to dispute what you quoted from the evaluation of the center I do think that in all fairness to the individuals who I know put many hard and dedicated hours into what was hoped to be a successful project, that you would have presented a more balanced picture of the difficulties that the center faced when opened. While you mention that there were administrative problems while the center was open, you should have been aware of the fact that just prior to the time the center opened that a very able administrator who had been the Executive Director of the Society for the past nine years had resigned. Certainly there have been failures in corrections but maybe it is time to give some credit to those who have made an honest and sincere effort to improve upon what had been the situation in the past. Sincerely,

J.H. Style.

Ed. Note:- When honesty and sincerity are accompanied by knowledge, a sense of responsibility, and experience, we would trip over ourselves in the rush to give credit. When we talk about corrections, we are talking about human beings who have been stripped of every defence, every dignity, and every right enjoyed by citizens. They are totally vulnerable. When we talk about corrections, we are also talking about other human beings into whose power the vulnerable have been placed. Honesty and sincerity alone should not possess that much power.

The former Executive Director of the John Howard Society, a man with nine years experience, conceived the treatment center in Regina. He wrote up the original proposal, he put together the experimental design. Methodologically, the experimental design would have got him a failure in an undergrad research methods class. This pretty well proved out in the 1st year of the center's operation. The obvious question is that if this was the case, how did it get approved by the federal government?

We can't answer it, but for a minute we can speculate.

The grant for \$83,000 came from the National Health and Welfare Department. Not from the Solicitor General, Department of Justice, Penitentiary Service or Parole Service; not from any department or agency which for sure had the personnel who could competently evaluate the proposal, as we stated in last month's article.

Just before that center opened, the nine-year veteran, the man whose brainchild the center was, resigned. He went to work for the National Health and Welfare Department. He went to work in their Welfare Grants Division. He left behind a new Exec

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who possessed limited experience, and if he was all that sharp, all that honest, and all that sincere, he knew this and should have at the very least arranged to have the grant withheld until the man could acquire the requisite experience. As for the new Executive Director, he too should have known he was out of his depth.

In these terms we're hard-pressed to rationalize honesty and sincerity. We don't have much trouble coming up with a case for self-seeking, dereliction, and mismanagement though. As far as we're concerned, the taxpayers got ripped off for \$83,000 by the John Howard Society of Saskatchewan.

We hope we've now balanced the picture. We can appreciate that good men can err sometimes. The prisons are full of them.

FRIENDS FOR ALL SEASONS

BY sk (a street folk)

Perhaps it's time to take a light but serious look at parole failure. The problem remains; men just keep coming back to prison. Academic theorists relate the causal situation through problems as disrelated as toilet training to politics (perhaps not all that distant). In any case, the authors and experts of penology and criminology seem to make the situation look difficult but easy to remedy "if only" their specific writings will be taught to undergrad students. The books they write sell and the second-hand academic drivel is spouted over coffee at some campus restaurant. Meanwhile things in the pen don't change. Nobody gets involved and soon there is a new text on the market. For most the comfort of distance possesses the real threat to any change for an inmate who wishes to make it on the street.

When people or organizations decide to go into the pens to make personal contact there are ulterior motives in the majority of cases. You can get a friend, or maybe even a job if you take Jesus or Buddha or whomever in the bargain. Maybe if you admit to being an alcoholic you can gain a friend from the outside who has done the same. Chances are the weekly encounters would be based mainly on a single narrow topic. If any type of friendship does form it has a non-friendship focal point. Meanwhile the pens don't change; parole doesn't show better results; and the problems remain. The only difference is that the penitentiary and parole services can show more evidence that rehabilitation programs don't work. Perhaps unwittingly they are destined to fail through their structure.

What program might show some light? It's difficult to say. The interesting point is the question. It boils down to: how can we make them like us? Rehabilitation means normalization, here anyway. It has nothing to do with moral strength. Society would be more than content to use surgery to cut out the criminal part of an inmate's brain; it would not be satisfied to fortify the moral part of the brain. The legal system wants to eliminate the obvious bad side-effects of our society. As one writer puts it, "if we don't see it, it's not there."

But it is there. And it hasn't changed, except for the worst. So the problem is how to normalize the people we classify as deviants. By doing this we can totally bypass the moral question, one better left undisturbed by a society which has not chosen to yet cope with that area of existence. The only possible way to make an inmate respond like a good citizen is to make him accept the values of the good citizen. This in turn demands constant contact between the two groups. When it is done on a group basis; e.g., the Elks, Kinsmen, or Ku Klux Klan, the value is lost. The values exposed will be those of the organizations, not of the individuals. This is important.

So, there is a need to get street folks into the pens and jails. Hopefully friendships on a personal level with a foundation of mutual respect will develop. Perhaps it won't. But if it is tried honestly and in good faith by the administration, the inmates, and the general public, there may be positive results. There are no limits to the possible types of privileges and programs already existing which, if liberalized, could suit normal relationships between people on both sides of the walls. And pilot projects in B.C. and Holland do give rise to optimism.

What's in it for the public? Perhaps more than it wants. Perhaps the public might see and come to understand things that were either physically or mentally blocked from them. Maybe this is not yet the best of all possible worlds. Perhaps by seeing what they are not, the public may come to understand better what they are.

MAILBAGS ARE FOREVER

Truly 'tis a funny world we live in. Discussion, a quarterly publication put out by the Canadian Penitentiary Service for its staff came our way the other day, and we became sorely jealous over its slick layouts. Staff should be pleased because a lot of bread is being poured into building up its lacklustre morale.

One of the articles caught our attention; it was what made ours a funny world for a day.

Readers may be unaware that all canvas mailbags used by the Post Office Department are manufactured and repaired by federal penitentiary inmates. No private business and no other government department does this work. There are mailbag shops in B.C. Penitentiary, Saskatchewan Penitentiary, Stony Mountain Penitentiary, Kingston Penitentiary, and Archambault Penitentiary. It can be seen that mailbags are big business in the penitentiaries. Nowhere else in the whole country. Just in the penitentiaries.

No wonder, therefore, that Discussion ran a feature article in its first issue about mailbags.

We asked ourselves a question. Inmates numbering well over a hundred must be making and fixing these bags, and since making and fixing these bags is big business to the industrial division in the pen'y., the division responsible for vocational training, there must be lots of jobs on the street for ex-cons trained to make and fix mailbags. The question: Are there? Answer: Nope.

Maybe there's lots of jobs for guys who know how to work the big sewing machines and stuff? Well, sometimes. Maybe a guy can get a job making canvas awnings. This is a "for instance" because everybody knows the aluminum industry took over the awning business ten years ago. But canvas is still used on some campers, and this is a growing industry, so it's conceivable an ex-con could adapt fairly easily to employment in this field.

But.

Discussion tells us of a marvellous new device specially developed to speed up mailbag repairs and eliminate need to use the big sewing machines and stuff which in the past provided exactly the experience an ex-con might be able to use in getting a job. The Penitentiary Service is now busily installing these highly specialized machines in all of its mailbag shops. The things are good only for mailbags.

Now the bureaucrats are not dumb. They must have a reason for not wanting ex-cons to get jobs.

So we thought and we thought. Sure enough, the revelation hit us like the flash from a long ago acid trip. If the cons who make and fix mailbags get jobs on the street, the Penitentiary Service won't have anybody to make and fix mailbags in the penitentiaries, and where's that leave them?

Then we thought some more.

If the Post Office and the Penitentiary Service is so desirous of having convict-type people make and fix mailbags, why don't they let out the contracts to a private business in the community operated by and employing ex-cons? At least then a con who becomes a journeyman mailbagger won't have to go to prison just to work at his trade.

(We like Discussion; hope we don't get sliced off its mailing list for this piece)

SO YOU WANNA GO TO COLLEGE, EH?

For those people naive enough to presume that taking a course in criminology or penology from the University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, would in any way assist them in gaining insight into crime and corrections in Canada --- FORGET IT!

As an ex-con and a student at this University, I made just that mistake, but two years and countless frustrations later it is my belief that if you want to learn anything at all about the Canadian justice system then stay away from the U. of Sask., unless of course you just need a soft credit or you're a policeman, corrections worker, or any of those who draw their livelihood from that system, in which case you will be strongly reinforced in your belief that the criminal justice system in Canada is great.

At U. of Sask., criminology and penology are introductory courses and as such are to be assumed to give the student at least some basic theory in these two areas. The crim classes are taught as a half class; penology as another half class. In 1972-73 crim was taught by a professor of sociology and a professor of law, neither of whom are crim specialists. The penology is taught by a sessional lecturer with a social work background whose only qualification in penology rests in a stint as a social worker in a boys' school in the U.S.

I can make no valid comment on the content of the crim course, not having taken it from the present faculty, but my major criticism rests in the fact that crim and penology are taught as two separate classes, with no effort made to draw a parallel between the two, causally or any other way. As anyone who has been in contact with the system can attest, there is a

relation, a strong relation and a vital one to any understanding of criminal behaviour or punishment in Canada.

That a social worker should be hired to teach penology is not surprising, as our whole system is based on that particular model, but to assume that that social worker, whose correctional experience is minimal and entirely limited to a U.S. justice model, should presume to teach anything about criminal justice or process in Canada is ludicrous, if not in itself bordering on a criminal act --- he's ripping off students for their tuition.

The textbooks are American, and the rationale for that is that there is no text available in Canada. This of course is another absurdity and reflects nothing more than laziness on the part of the prof. There are plenty of Canadian books, commission reports, presentations, and theses that spell out with clarity the past, present, and probable future of penology in Canada.

The refusal of the prof to use the pertinent Canadian material leaves him with no alternative but to fill the class time with guest lecturers made up of the professionals in the area --- parole officers, probation officers, policemen, and the fairest assessment to be made of most of them is that they are like non-golfers --- they can't be expected to know their ass from a hole in the ground. At least one of his professionals hangs his credentials on having taken penology from the same prof. Blind leading the blind?

A MAN NAMED JOHN

In 1777, an English eccentric came out with a strong attack on British prisons as oppressive and dehumanizing institutions. The man was John Howard.

Now, almost two hundred years later, the John Howard Council of Prince Albert has refused to endorse a report from its former Executive Secretary which termed the Saskatchewan Penitentiary oppressive and dehumanizing. Gentlemen, you should be ashamed!

At least two of you, Elmer Hicks and Harold Reid, are seeking to protect your prized public respectability and overblown sense of self-importance at the expense of admitting you are wrong. Both of you, Elmer Hicks and Harold Reid, are members of the Penitentiary Citizens' Advisory Committee of Apologists. Naturally, you can't say the prison is oppressive and dehumanizing because people would say, "howcum you say this now --- you've been active in the affairs of that pen for almost as many years as it has been there?" For the conditions that presently exist there you both are at least partly responsible, because you've traded humanity and the lives of at least five men for a little status in a community that's only on the map because of the presence of the penitentiary and John Diefenbaker.

The credibility gap between the John Howard Society and the penitentiary inmates has been growing wider by leaps and bounds, but there are a lot of people on other John Howard Councils who are trying to close that gap. The action of the Prince

Albert Council has turned the clock back past 1777 and widened the credibility gap into a chasm.

That prisons in general, and the Saskatchewan Penitentiary in particular, is/are oppressive and dehumanizing is a matter of record.

The Archaebault Report (1935) quotes wardens of Canadian penitentiaries as saying that the use of fear has been the principal tool for running their institutions.

The Mohr Report (1971) recommends closing down of the Saskatchewan Penitentiary because in essence it is oppressive and dehumanizing.

Prince Albert's reaction to that report was voiced by their eloquent MP, John Diefenbaker, who demanded an immediate investigation because --- and take note of this --- because of the serious economic effect on the city of Prince Albert of such a closing. Too true! The manufacturing of criminals is a lucrative business not only for prison staff but for all the local merchants, and it has been the mainstay of Prince Albert's existence for many years. To many of the present merchants and trade union people should go some commendation because they have been instrumental in the success of Conforce, the inmate-initiated work program --- the only bright spot in the whole oppressive, dehumanizing mess. Yet, even to this program, we hear Frank Dunn, the esteemed and duly-elected Mayor of Prince Albert, pleading that the pen not release inmates on TLA's because it's costing the city too much for surveillance. Failure rate on TLA'S is .7% Mr. Dunn, probably less than the drunk rate and wife-beating rate in your fair metropolis, so howcum all this oh-so-costly surveillance?

Al Hartley, the former Executive Secretary who filed the "scandalous" report noted the "seduction" tactics used by pen'y administrators and their running dogs in the community of Prince Albert to gull the citizens of Prince Albert. How does it work? Simple. The media is supplied with all the news about intentions but none of the news about actualities.

In 1967-68 the first Citizens' Advisory Board was formed. The administrators sent out Public Relations blurbs to all members telling them about federal programs operating and pending. And to be sure, they can look good on paper. And each year the Citizens' Advisory Gang is feted at a wine and cheese bash either at the warden's residence or at the officers' mess. Here they get the handshake, the smile of recognition so dear to their self-esteem, and a trite comment on what a fine job they're doing. (Some of them are, we should add, doing a damn fine job. Moreover, conceptually, the Citizens' Advisory Committee is valuable, but it would be more valuable if the cons picked its members, not the wardens).

Coming to the defence of his sacrosanct prison, Mr. Reid describes its programs as 'progressive'. Mr. Reid would do well to look at a few of the other prisons in the country. But why bother: look at PA; Conforce, the work program, was initiated by cons; the university program was spearheaded through by one staff member in opposition to the rest of the administration, including Jim O'Sullivan who is presently 2nd in Charge at the prison and D.J. Rooney, who was the man's immediate superior as well as the Asst. Director in charge of Inmate Training; the pocketbook library, with a greater circulation than the pen library, was begun by inmates. These are a few; there are more; none initiated by the Citizens' Advisory group. And Mr. Reid, to put these programs into action didn't require that inmates first be posited as evil, immoral, and sick as the 'missionary' and medical model approaches to corrections and huma

treatment do. But then, if we aren't evil, immoral, and sick, the 'progressives' cannot demonstrate their goodness, kindness, and charity by redeeming the lost souls and curing the sick souls.

The report submitted by Mr. Hartley was reported to have been accepted at the Annual General Meeting of the PA John Howard and then rejected at the later meeting of the Council members. It was also reported that Tom Ellis, the warden/director attended the 2nd meeting to denounce the report. A member of the PA Council unofficially told us that while Council members agreed with the substance of the report, they refused to endorse it, because they feared programs would be cut back. We refer again to the wardens' statement in the Archambault Report. Fear apparently works on citizens as well as on inmates.

Al Hartley has been one of the most capable people to work with inmates in recent years. He has carried his concern far beyond the call of duty. In short, he cares; and in writing this report he has done a great service to inmates.

The fact remains, of course, that Al Hartley is a political maverick and Prince Albert has never been known to tolerate any mavericks, political or otherwise.

The John Howard Council of Prince Albert has been regarded as moribund for a number of years, even by many members of other JHS Councils in the province. Al Hartley has had to work against its lack of cooperation, true concern, and stagnation for several of those years. This latest action by the PA Council is vicious, irresponsible, and unconscionable. On behalf of all inmates, Mr. Hartley, we thank you. Your activity in association with the JHS has been an honor to the spirit of the man, John Howard. As for the Council members who voted down

the report, yours, gentlemen, has been a degradation; particularly since your vote is simultaneous with reports of two more suicides inside the walls of Saskatchewan Penitentiary.

NEXT MONTH's issue will feature an in-depth report and critical assessment of native problems in the prison and in the community, as well as an analysis of native efforts to alleviate these problems. The article, by Larry Bell, has been over two months in the collecting of data and the writing.

Included in the issue will be a taped interview with one of that everpresent breed, "the prairie dope fiend", and a look back at the activities of the 1973 Corrections Congress.

beginning here ...

THE MEMOIRS OF SLOW GEORGE

(that is to say, Mad Dog Incestuous
Opportunistic Culturally-deprived
SLOW GEORGE)

Hi there. My name's Slow George. My convict number is so low it has a minus sign in front of it. But that's OK. Be better though if it wasn't written in Roman numerals.

I guess for my first instalment you know, it woulda been nice if you Transition guys had asked for my memoirs before I sent them to you, but my Living Unit Officer who is a true friend, a young and kindly pink-cheeked true friend, said I should learn the Life Skill of initiative. So I thought I'd lay a Life Skill on you. Anyway, I conned him outa the postage. Well, for my first instalment I thought I'd enlighten everybody as to how I got my name.

I've been here since 1937. I remember Fatty Arbuckle. No, he wasn't here. I was on the street then. And those were the days when streets were streets and street-walkers were street-walkers. Didn't have camper trucks then; they walked and that's a fact.

Anyway, I'm a lifer. No sense describing why. Let's just say there's acid you drop and there's acid you throw.

Well, Judge Entwhistle, Judge Eldridge Augustine Entwhistle to be precise, opined that I was a mad dog.

Now picture this: he is the one wearing the Dracula robe and the far-out frightwig and he calls ME a mad dog. Anyway, he may have had the weirdo outfit but he had all the power too so thenceforth, I was Mad Dog George.

I appealed the beef and went through the usual stuff but as per the usual stuff I finally got sent to the joint to do the time. You win a few, you lose a few, and if you're a mad dog you don't care any which way anyway, and I was a mad dog. Now that I think of it, I was a P'd-off person too.

So here I was, and one mean mother to boot. Until along comes this dude with a pince nez and a goatee. We yick-yacked for awhile and he comes on real learned like, "Mad Dog, you lusted for your Mommy! You did in your victim because he reminded you of your oppressive Daddy." "Eureka!" says I, and belts him one in the yap. Well, I go to the hole. When I get out everybody starts calling me Mad Dog Incestuous George.

I lived with the name. Then in the Forties, just when I settled into pulling my time, along comes another dude. He spends so much time writing stuff down I figure I'm being Gallup polled. Finally he says something. He says, "Mad Dog Incestuous George, the reason you did what you did is because you had the opportunity to do it. If you hadn't had the opportunity you wouldn't have done it and unless you have the opportunity again you won't do it again."

Well I didn't belt him. You don't belt lunatics. How could I help but agree with him. If my hapless victim hadn't been in the alley with me I couldn't have got him. That's pretty obvious because if he hadn't been in the alley he'd have been somewhere else and I'd have been left standing there like a bloody fool.

And unless he came back from the grave, I won't have the opportunity to get him again. I won't even need it. So, this guy was right and I got some more name, Mad Dog Incestuous Opportunistic George.

Another ten years went by and everything was groovy. The young got old, forgot their funny notions, and became just more bulls. But more young dudes kept coming along. I'll say this for the next one; he looked as intense as hell. He says, "Mad Dog Incestuous Opportunistic George, you did what you did because you didn't know any better; you were culturally-deprived; you did not have equal opportunity, the benefit of decent medical services, fair employment practices, consumer protection, and the right to vote in municipal elections." The dude was obviously a warmongering Commie, so I belted him.

But, when I got out of the hole, Culturally-deprived had been stuck between the Opportunistic and the George.

Well, it's 1973 now, and things have changed again. There are more creepy people running around here correcting than there are cons to be corrected. I don't care; it's not coming out of my taxes. Some of these birds have long hair and some of them have short hair. The winner I was assigned is sorta in between like he's not sure which camp he's goin' stay in, so he's planted a foot in both. "It helps me to relate," he says. Somebody should tell him that to try to relate to all of the people all of the time is to relate to none of the people any of the time. All things to all people is nothing to any of them. Respect the wisdom of an old con. The worst you can do is go astray, and get another year for escape.

Well, my dude tested and diddled and fiddled. Once he even farted. He called that a natural part of a viable

human relationship and was pleased as all get out. I got out too, it was bloody foul.

Anyway he finally says to me, "What you did was a self-fulfilling prophecy. You believed you had no choice but to do it and so you did it. All of your previous convictions were held against you by society, society said you would do worse, and you believed society, so you did worse. You were labelled and so you lived the label."

Now everybody may wonder how the Slow part of my name came out of that wee chit-chat. Well, I tacked it in there myself because I figure if anybody lets society con him that bad, he's got to be pretty slow on the uptake.

I got lots more to say in my memoirs in upcoming issues. So 'til then, this is Mad Dog Incestuous Opportunistic Culturally-deprived Slow George, Slow George for short, saying, "Be solid, at least in your own head."

RON MARKEN: JUS' FOLKS

When he's feeling pretentious he calls himself Doctor Ronald N.G. Marken, BA, MA, PhD, Assistant Professor of English, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon Campus. To the Saskatchewan Penitentiary inmates and to his on-campus students he's just Ron.

Ron isn't very old, somewhere in his muddly untrustable Thirties; he's married and has a clutch of little ones; he votes, maybe even for the Wafflers; and he writes poetry, which is what English profs are supposed to do anyway so maybe that isn't such a big deal.

Ron's first acquaintance with the inmates of the Saskatchewan Penitentiary was as a paid teacher. He taught a six-week Creative Writing course there in early 1972. That was all he had to do. Teach it and go home. But he did more. He taped some of the material written by inmates and arranged to have it aired on CBC. The encouragement this provided inmates can be well-imagined.

In 1972-73 Ron taught inmates and staff first-year university English. Again, he was paid by the university. Again, he went out of his way to encourage inmate creativity. Not only that, he began public appearances to tell the community about the talent it had locked up. He didn't have to do this; he has other interests, his own writing for instance, and for anyone who writes, to forego writing is a substantial sacrifice.

Ron is active in the Greystone Theater in Saskatoon. He arranged to have one of the theater's drama productions staged at the prison for inmates. Many

inmates had never before seen live drama by a capable theater company.

The play, combined with the inmate drama group, stimulated great interest among other inmates. The Greystone company, many of whom had never met a con or been inside a prison, were also stimulated. They also recognized the enthusiasm and talent locked in there.

As a result of the presentation, several Greystone people are now conducting workshops in acting and stagecraft for the inmates. The inmate drama group has felt enough encouragement, success, and growing knowledge to begin preparations for an entry in the Dominion Drama Festival. We hope it comes about.

As for Ron, well, now that he's managed to enlist other people in developing inmate talents in the area of drama, he's moved along to other things.

In cooperation with a Toronto publisher, he's assembling a book of inmate poetry and fiction.

Does he have to do this? No, he doesn't. But will he do it well? Yes, he probably will. Will it help his career? Probably not. Will it help his position in the community? No, probably the opposite. Is he just another bleeding heart? One ex-inmate who took English on-campus last year answered that question when asked why he wouldn't take Ron's class on campus. "Are you kidding?" he replied. "He marks too hard!"

A lot of people try to take credit for the efforts of people like Ron. This is endemic to the politics of corrections. The credit we can give Ron falls far short of what he deserves, nevertheless, we give it for what it's worth.

ANOTHER FORM OF TRANSITION

Transition's CRIME AGAINST HUMANITY AWARD this month goes to Stoney Mountain Penitentiary's intrepid Supercensor Al Hickey for his ability to violate Penitentiary directives by extending his chocolate cake and coffee breaks into the visiting hours of inmates so deftly that penitentiary administrators haven't yet caught up to the tactic.

This alone is insufficient to merit our award. But Super Al, the evangelical voyeur, so excels at the fine craft of pettifoggery above and beyond the directions laid down in the Bureaucrats' Book of Pomposity that joyously and humbly we yield to him the saving grace, the immortality, and the blossoming ego trip to be found in receiving our award.

How fine Super Al will feel to be snooping through someone else's mail---because we didn't send him a copy---and discover his name emblazoned on this, our most coveted page. Indeed, that he discovers it is a tribute to his dedication, sublimated perversity, and majestic but somewhat pulicous puissance. There is nothing about everybody else's business that he does not know; there is not a letter or a visitor which has not been scanned by his disdainful and dehumanizing eye.

When Super Al says, "You're too cozy" to folk separated for months, everyone recognizes that priggishness and officiousness are mere tools to his tongue because Super Al always knows what he's talking about. As he has won the confidence of whoever bakes his chocolate cake, so has he won ours, and our award too.

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